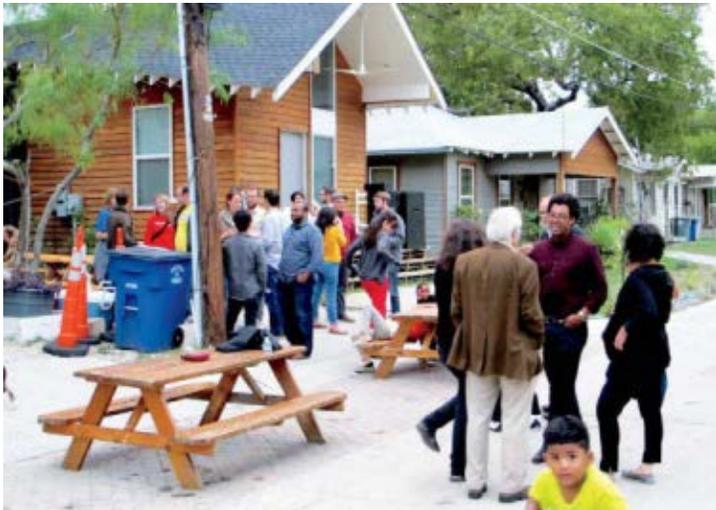


“Rudy Bruner Award winners highlight the diversity of innovation in our cities today. They show us urban excellence at all scales and inspire us with their optimism.”

—Simeon Bruner, Founder

Introduction: 2013 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence



Congo Street Initiative award celebration

The 2013 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence (RBA) medalists illustrate a diversity of approaches to placemaking. As has been the case over the past 25 years of the award, they demonstrate creative, innovative approaches to addressing complex urban challenges that add beauty as well as provide important social and economic benefits to communities.

Once more, the winners remind us that effective urban placemaking happens at all scales, in all kinds of settings, and with all types of agendas – be it six individual homes or a 222-unit housing development, an 80-seat restaurant, an 85-acre park, or a 3.5-acre arts campus.

Different as they are, these five projects also have much in common. All have transformed underutilized and overlooked urban spaces – deteriorating houses and industrial structures, city blocks and vacant, environmentally contaminated land – into vibrant places that bring people, skills, and communities together. In doing so, they challenge our assumptions about what is possible and how positive change in communities occurs. They inspire us with their optimism and the potential to yield broader changes in their cities and elsewhere.

Some of the themes that emerged from discussions about the 2013 medalists are familiar and have been encountered in past cycles of the RBA. Others highlight issues and concerns that seem particularly relevant to urban development in 2013. Regardless, there is much to learn from these winners, the ideas they embody, and the rich discussions that emerged during the selection process.

It is the exchange of information and the conversation about ideas that makes the RBA and its selection process so compelling, and distinguishes it from other design awards. With each cycle, a new, six-member selection committee is charged with the seemingly impossible task of reviewing a broad array of submissions and selecting five medalists. Every year the submissions include projects of all different types, scales, and budgets that address a variety of ambitions, missions, goals, urban settings and challenges.

Selection committee deliberations are always fascinating, as six people with different experiences and perspectives consider and discuss the submissions, contemplate the definition of "urban excellence" and come to consensus after lengthy, passionate discussions. Every year, the committee takes on the challenge and completes it with style, grace and insightful commentary. In the end, through their selection of and comments about the five medalists, the committee makes a statement about the condition of urban America at that particular point in time that provides valuable insight for anyone interested in the evolution of cities. The goal of this book is to share these insights and what we have learned from the 2013 winners and selection committee discussions.

THE RUDY BRUNER AWARD FOR URBAN EXCELLENCE

The Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence (RBA) celebrates urban places distinguished by quality design and their contributions to the social and economic vitality and environmental quality of our nation's cities. Founded in 1985 by Cambridge, Massachusetts architect Simeon Bruner, the award seeks to promote innovative thinking about the built environment and to advance conversation about making cities better.

One Gold Medal of \$50,000 and four Silver Medals of \$10,000 are awarded each biennial. The RBA is distinguished by its intensive application and rigorous selection process, along with the publication of detailed case studies about the winners that are resources for architecture and planning professionals.

HOW IT WORKS

Application

The criteria for eligibility are intentionally broad, as the RBA seeks excellence in places where it may not be expected. In order to be eligible, projects must be: built (not just a plan or a program), urban and located in the continental United States. Projects should be completed and in operation long enough to demonstrate impact in the community. "Urban" includes incorporated cities, towns and villages; a neighborhood within a city; an urban county; or an officially recognized region made up of two or more cities.

The application requires a detailed description of the project, visuals and perspectives from people involved in the project and its operation. At least four perspectives are required, from categories including architect or designer, community, developer, professional consultant, public agency and other (for people or unique points of view who do not fit the others). These perspectives provide additional information and valuable insight about the project's development and impact in the community. The application may be submitted by any person involved in the planning, development or operation of the project.



Clockwise from top left: 2013 finalist submissions, selection committee deliberations, Mick Cornett and Cathy Simon review applications, Walter Hood and Ann Coulter discuss submissions

Selection Process

Each award cycle begins with the issuing of the Call for Entries in September, with submissions due the following December.

Award winners are selected by a committee comprised of six urban experts, assembled anew for each award cycle by the Bruner Foundation. Each committee includes a mayor of a major American city and a participant from a past Rudy Bruner Award winning project. Additional members include architects, landscape architects, urban designers and planners, developers and financiers, and urban advocates such as writers, policy experts and community organizers.

The selection committee is convened twice. The first meeting takes place in January at the Bruner Foundation headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts. During a day-long, facilitated process, committee members review and discuss all the submissions and select five finalists. They also identify questions and additional information they'd like to know about each project.

Over the next three months a team of Bruner Foundation staff and consultants visits each of the five projects, spending two to three days on site – touring the project and its surrounding neighborhood, taking photographs, and interviewing people involved in the project's development and use. The team also collects additional information – such as articles and publications, drawings and plans, photographs, reports, etc. – provided by the applicant and other project participants as well as through independent research.

Findings from the visits are presented to the selection committee at its second meeting in May, which is hosted by the Mayor in his or her



respective city. Over the course of another day-long facilitated session, committee members discuss the five finalists and the findings from the site visits and determine the medalists. One project will receive the Gold Medal and \$50,000 award and the remaining four will each receive a Silver Medal and \$10,000.

Award Presentation

Once the medalists are determined, the Bruner Foundation works with the winners to plan the presentation of the awards. These events showcase and celebrate the medalists, and often include public programming such as tours and panel discussions that highlight their stories and impact their communities. Past awards have been presented in collaboration with the U.S Conference of Mayors and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Case Studies

The information gathered from site visits and selection committee discussions becomes the basis for detailed case studies about the winners and the award cycle that are produced by the Bruner Foundation so that the winners' stories and lessons learned can be shared with students and practitioners. Each case study includes information and illustrations that describe the project's history, leadership, development, design, operations, financing and impact. A summary of the selection committee discussion highlights key ideas and themes from their review of the submissions and the process leading to the selection of the winners.



Clockwise from top: touring Congo Street Initiative, meeting with The Steel Yard staff, interviewing visitors at Louisville Waterfront Park, Inspiration Kitchens—Garfield Park walk-through, Via Verde discussion



Steven E Gross Associates/James Kittenborn



RESOURCES

Publications

Case studies from each award cycle are assembled into a publication that incorporates a summary of themes and distillation of selection committee discussions. Case studies and publications are available online on the foundation website and in hard copy. For more information, visit www.brunerfoundation.org/RBA.

Digital Archive

A digital archive provides access to information on Rudy Bruner Award medalists from 1987 to the present. The archive contains original application materials and images and may be searched by keyword, award year or project type. The project was initiated in 1998 by the University of Buffalo Libraries in cooperation with the Bruner Foundation, and is coordinated through The Urban Design Project of the School of Architecture and Planning. It is a valuable tool for students, practitioners and others interested in the urban development and cities. The archive may be accessed via the Bruner Foundation website or <http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/bruner/>.

Bruner-Loeb Forum

Established in 2001, the Bruner-Loeb Forum is a partnership between the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence and the Harvard University Loeb Fellowship Program that brings together distinguished practitioners from across the country to advance creative thinking about placemaking in American cities. Hosted in partnership with organizations working in cities across the country, these annual forums are designed to encourage local and national dialogue, share resources, and foster new approaches to issues facing the urban environment. To learn more visit www.brunerloeb.org.

Clockwise from top left: Dallas Center for Architecture presentation, panel discussion at The Steel Yard award ceremony, Inspiration Kitchens—Garfield Park board and staff with award, 2013 Bruner Loeb Forum on Legacy Design program, panel discussion in Detroit

THE 2013 AWARD

The 2013 RBA selection committee reviewed 90 applications from 57 cities and municipalities representing 30 states and the District of Columbia. Projects ranged in scale from development budgets of \$100,000 to over \$550 million. Over the course of two meetings that took place in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma the committee selected five finalists and determined the 2013 Gold and Silver Medalists. The selection process was facilitated by Rich Wener who participated in all of the site visits and oversaw – along with RBA director Anne-Marie Lubenau – development of the site visit reports, winner case studies and the 2013 publication.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

The 2013 selection committee included*:

Honorable Mick Cornett, Mayor
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Ann Coulter, Owner, A. Coulter Consulting
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Walter Hood, Principal, Hood Design and Professor,
University of California, Berkeley College of Environmental Design
Oakland, California

Cathy Simon, FAIA, Design Principal, Perkins+Will
San Francisco, California

Susan S. Szenasy, Editor-in-Chief, METROPOLIS
New York, New York

Jane Werner, Executive Director, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
(2007 RBA Gold Medalist), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

**titles listed as of 2013 selection process*



Clockwise from top left: Mick Cornett, Ann Coulter, Walter Hood, Cathy Simon, Susan Szenasy, Jane Werner

AWARD WINNERS

The 2013 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence medalists include:

Gold Medal:

Inspiration Kitchens—Garfield Park, Chicago, Illinois

An 80-seat restaurant in Chicago serving affordable, healthy meals prepared by people rebuilding their lives in a workforce development program.

Silver Medals:

Congo Street Initiative, Dallas, Texas

Six houses designed and constructed/reconstructed in collaboration with residents along Dallas' first public green street.

Louisville Waterfront Park, Louisville, Kentucky

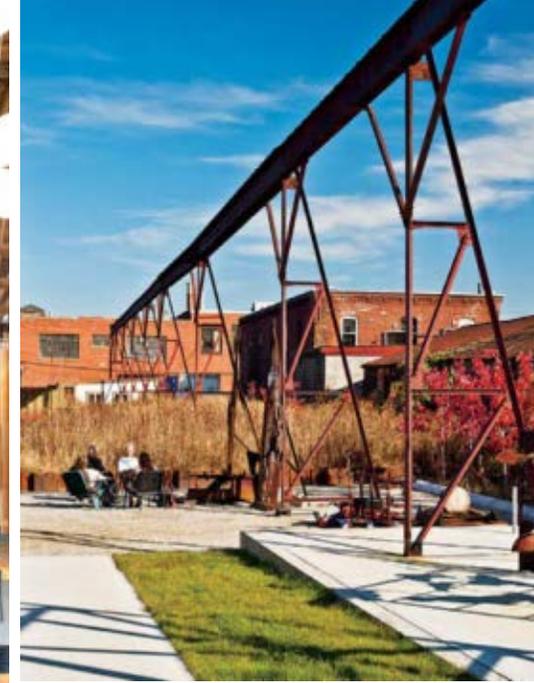
An 85-acre waterfront park that reconnects the City of Louisville with the Ohio River.

The Steel Yard, Providence, Rhode Island

The redevelopment of a historic steel fabrication facility into a campus providing arts education, workforce training, and small-scale manufacturing in Providence's Industrial Valley.

Via Verde – The Green Way, Bronx, New York

A 222-unit mixed income housing development in the Bronx that aspires to establish a new model for affordable housing in New York City.



Photos clockwise from left: Steven Gross; Christian Phillips Photography; David Sundberg/Esto; Waterfront Development Corporation; buildingcommunityWORKSHOP

Clockwise from top left: Inspiration Kitchens—Garfield Park, The Steel Yard, Via Verde, Louisville Waterfront Park, Congo Street Initiative

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Anne-Marie Lubenau, AIA is the Director of the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence. Prior to joining the Bruner Foundation she practiced architecture, developed and taught curricula on the built environment and served as President and CEO of the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh. She was a 2012 Loeb Fellow at Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

Jay Farbstein, FAIA, PhD is an architect by training. He leads a consulting practice in Los Angeles, California that specializes in helping public sector clients develop and document their requirements of building projects as well as in post-occupancy evaluation. Jay was recently honored with a lifetime achievement award by the Environmental Design Research Association.

Robert Shibley, FAIA, AICP is Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at SUNY Buffalo. He is also the founding partner of Caucus Partnership, a consulting practice on environmental and organizational change. Bob received the American Institute of Architecture's 2014 Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture.

Richard Wener, PhD is an environmental psychologist, and professor in the Department of Technology, Culture and Society at the Polytechnic School of Engineering of New York University, where he heads the Sustainable Urban Environments program. He has done extensive research on the effects of built environments on individuals and communities. Rich received the Environmental Design Research Association's 2013 Career Award.

ABOUT THE BRUNER FOUNDATION

Established in 1963 by Rudy and Martha Bruner, the Bruner Foundation seeks to create opportunities for others and to instigate meaningful social change. Building collaborative partnerships, leveraging resources and tackling complex societal issues are the common threads of the Foundation's 50-year history. It has placed priority on assisting neglected and disenfranchised segments of society and has influenced national policy in health care delivery, holocaust studies, educational policy and non-profit evaluation methodologies, and increased understanding of the urban built environment. The Foundation's Effectiveness Initiatives focuses on building and sustaining the internal evaluative capacity of non-profit service providers (visit <http://www.evaluativethinking.org> to learn more).

For more information please contact:

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